

INFORMATION REPORT

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25X1A

SUPPLEMENT TO
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25X1X

General.

1. The reorganization of the border guard forces committed along the Czechoslovakian-Bavarian border began in October 1950. The SNB units previously employed in border guard duty were replaced by PS (Pohraniční stráž) units which were activated from army units reassigned to the PS and from personnel of the former SNB border guard units. Units which were reassigned to the PS in the fall of 1950 included the 46th Inf Bn in As, the 64th Inf Bn in Pobezovice, the 66th Inf Bn in Vimperk and the 77th Inf Bn in Karlovy Vary. In April 1951, all former SNB men in active service with PS units were promoted to the rank of junior lieutenant regardless of their previous rank and were dropped from the lists of the SNB. A substantial number of recruits inducted in the fall of 1950 were reassigned to the PS brigades upon completion of a short period of basic training with infantry regiments. The whole reorganization resulted in a substantial increase of the personnel assigned to border guard duty along the Bavarian border.

Organization and Subordination.

2. The High Command of PS units has the designation [REDACTED] and is located in Prague. It moved from the former Police Barracks in Prague-Vršovice to Prague-Smíchov in December 1950. The headquarters has been under the command of Colonel Hlavacka (fmu) since the spring of 1951 and is subordinate directly to the Ministry of Internal Security.
3. Five PS brigades are stationed along the Bavarian border. They include the 1st Brig in Cheb, the 2d Brig in Plana, the 3d Brig in Pobezovice, the 4th Brig in Sušice and the 5th Brig in Volary. Each brigade is believed to consist of four PS battalions on guard duty, and one replacement or training battalion. The brigade headquarters units include a guard unit, a signal unit, a motor transport unit and a labor unit, each of which is of either company or platoon strength and has an average strength of 30 to 40 men. There have been indications that engineer, mortar and heavy machine gun units belong to the individual brigades. There is the possibility that the PS brigades have not yet attained a uniform organizational structure.
4. The battalions assigned to border guard duty are consecutively numbered within the brigades from the 1st to the 4th. Most of the battalions have 5 companies on border duty, 1 reserve company and 1 headquarters company, with the latter

25X1C

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SECURITY INFORMATION

2

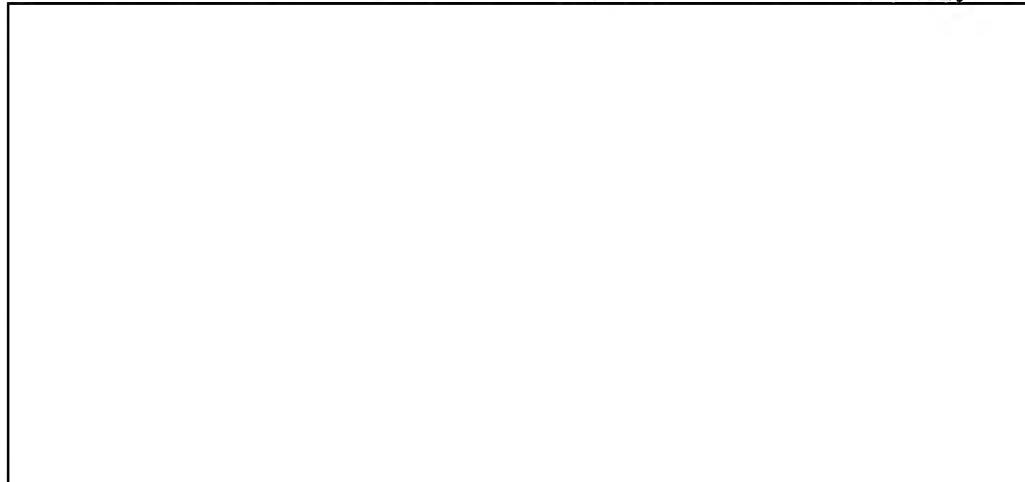


25X1A

consisting of a guard platoon, a labor platoon, 1 communications platoon and a motor transport platoon. The average PS battalion guards a border sector of about 15 km. The sectors of the PS battalions in Utranice and As have not been determined. They apparently face Bavarian territory as well as the territory of the Soviet Zone of Germany.

5. The structure of the PS brigade and battalion headquarters has not been determined. Officer posts at brigade and battalion headquarters include those of commanding officer, adjutant, chief of staff, political officer, DOZ officer, indoctrination officer, youth activities officer, supply officer, motor transport officer, administrative officer, cipher officer and medical officer. Only brigade headquarters has an additional engineer officer and personnel officer; and only battalion headquarters has an additional ordnance officer. Senior NCOs sometimes fill officer posts at the battalion level. 25X1

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Personnel and Strength.

7. Since the fall of 1950, the PS units have been receiving draftees out of the normal classes of recruits. Draftees of the 1929 and 1930 classes were inducted into the PS training units in July 1951 and distributed to the PS companies in the fall of 1951. Personnel from PS units are discharged only in the fall of each year, and it is fairly definitely believed that the term of service with the PS units amounts to 2 years and 3 months.

8. Since the fall of 1951, the strengths of PS companies have been raised from about 40 men to an average of 50 or 60 men, so that each PS battalion has an average strength of 425 men. The strength of a PS brigade headquarters, including its headquarters units and the training battalion, is estimated at 500 to 700. The five brigades committed to border guard duty along the Bavarian border are therefore believed to have a total strength of 11,000 to 12,000.

9. During the initial period of their existence, the PS units included Slovaks, sometimes as many as 40 percent of their total strength. The number of Slovaks was gradually reduced to about 10 percent of the command, probably because of the numerous desertions by members of this ethnic group. It is believed that the program under which Slovaks were replaced by Czechs has been virtually

SECRET//

SECURITY INFORMATION

SECRET//

SECURITY INFORMATION

3



25X1A

completed.

10. It is conspicuous that the PS units are commanded and staffed by officers whose rank is out of proportion to the posts they fill. For example, brigades are commanded by captains and battalions and companies by lieutenants. A number of brigade commanders were detached to the U.S.S.R. to attend training courses in the fall of 1951.

Weapons, Equipment and Uniforms.

11. The PS units are armed with Czech rifles and former German model 98 rifles, model 48-A and model 48-B submachine guns and pistols. An average company has in addition 3 to 6 light machine guns of model 26 and 1 heavy machine gun of model 37. There may be 82-mm mortars with the brigade headquarters units. Old German gas masks have been occasionally observed with PS units.

12. The PS units are not fully motorized, but have only as many motor vehicles as are required to maintain logistical support and to make components of the units truckable in case of emergency. Each PS company has 1 sedan and 1 motorcycle; a battalion headquarters usually has 4 trucks, 4 sedans and several motorcycles; a brigade headquarters usually has about 15 trucks, 10 sedans and 10 motorcycles.

13. All PS units can be reached by telephone. The telephone net even provides for intra-unit connections. Communication between the brigade and its battalions as well as among the battalions can also be effected by radio. Each PS brigade is connected with [redacted] by teletype.

25X1C

14. All PS personnel wear a standard uniform. They have dress uniforms with red-bordered green epaulets and a dog's head emblem on the lapels. The service uniforms display only the dog's head emblem on the lapels.

Border Control.

15. The individual PS companies guard a border stretch of about 3 km on an average, which is controlled by either patrols or, more frequently, by stationary posts of 2 or 3 men. Each company also has several trained dogs.

16. A string of field fortifications is being established along the entire border. Reports from numerous PS battalion sectors mentioned a barren strip raked so that the footprints of illegal border crossers are revealed, AT obstacles, mine fields, wire entanglements, and field positions which sometimes include underground shelters.

17. The border zone which extended to a depth of 6 to 8 km prior to 1 November 1951 has been divided into an off limits zone parallel to the border having a width of 200 to 500 meters and a subsequent border zone extending within Czechoslovakia for 5 or 6 km. All personnel other than PS personnel who entered the off limits zone had to be escorted by a member of the PS company in charge. SMD stations were located behind the border zone only.

18. It has been reported that there are plans providing for mutual employment of PS units and army units stationed near the border in case of major border incidents. The army units concerned can be alerted by PS authorities. In case of war, the PS units have the mission of defending the border until the arrival of regular army units.

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SECURITY INFORMATION

SECRET

SECURITY INFORMATION

4



25X1A

Control of the other Borders of Czechoslovakia.

19. PS brigades are also believed to be stationed on all Czechoslovakian borders. For example, two PS brigades have been identified in Karlovy Vary and C. Budejovice respectively. But it is believed that PS units along those borders are more thinly spread than on the border facing Bavaria.

25X1C

25X1A
25X1C

* [redacted] comment: For a list of PS brigades and battalions with their [redacted]
[redacted] as far as they have been determined, see Annex

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SECURITY INFORMATION

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt